

# West Woodburn First School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	122190
<b>Local authority</b>	Northumberland
<b>Inspection number</b>	380416
<b>Inspection dates</b>	1–2 December 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jeffery Plumb

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	28
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Richard Virden
<b>Headteacher</b>	Susan Beavers
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 January 2009
<b>School address</b>	West Woodburn Hexham NE48 2RX
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. Four lessons were observed, taught by three different teachers and a teaching assistant. Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, members of staff and a group of pupils. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of evidence, including data on pupils' progress and attainment, attendance data and a sample of pupils' exercise books. He also scrutinised school policies, including all of the safeguarding policies, the community cohesion plan, the school development plan and 13 questionnaire returns from parents and carers and the questionnaires returned by staff and pupils.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work. He looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- What is the impact of the recently introduced reading and writing scheme on pupils' achievement.
- Why is the rate of pupils' progress slower in mathematics than in reading and writing.
- Has the recently introduced whole school creative curriculum accelerated pupils' learning and raised their academic achievement.

## Information about the school

This is a smaller than average first school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Currently, there are no pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities on roll. All pupils are White British. The school hosts independently run childcare, known as the North Tynies West Woodburn Pre-School, which is not run by the school governing body. This provision is subject to a separate Ofsted inspection and report.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate**  
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

West Woodburn First School provides a good quality of education and care. It is an improving school. Progress made by pupils in all year groups is now good whereas it was satisfactory at the time of the previous inspection. The successful implementation of a whole school creative curriculum and improved teaching contribute to pupils' good achievement and above average attainment.

Attainment on entry to Year 1 for the current Year 4 pupils was average. Throughout Key Stage 1 these pupils made good gains in their learning. By the end of Year 2 they attained above average scores in the teachers' assessments for reading, writing and mathematics. They continued to build on this success and their standards remain above those typically found nationally for nine year olds. However, although good, the rate of pupils' progress is slower in mathematics throughout the school compared to reading and writing. The school has recently implemented a new mathematics scheme to address this issue, but it is too early to evaluate its effectiveness. Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in their above average attendance. Their behaviour is good and they engage enthusiastically with learning in all lessons. All pupils understand the importance of eating healthy foods and taking regular exercise. They feel safe and state clearly that, in this family school, they look after each other. Older pupils act as buddies for younger pupils and are proactive in listening out for any worries they may have and ensuring that they are secure and happy at playtime. Pupils are well equipped with the independent learning skills required to be successful when they move to middle school.

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers are adept at planning lessons with activities tailored to meet the needs of a wide range of ages within the same class. Flexible grouping within classes enables higher achieving younger pupils to work collaboratively with older pupils and this accelerates their learning and raises their achievement. Pupils often exceed their expectations in lessons. Basic skills are taught well through curriculum themes, which successfully motivate pupils' learning. For example, literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills are well delivered through a food topic. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress and those in Reception Year in 2010–2011 reached standards above the national average. Work is in progress to improve their outdoor learning environment and it is used well to promote children's physical development. However, the children do not always have the opportunity for free access to an outdoor environment to develop in all of their areas of required learning. Each pupil

is well cared for in this school. Staff know the individual 'quirks' of every pupil and ensure that their strengths are celebrated and that their personal and learning needs are well met.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher is supported effectively by the governing body in implementing new and pioneering strategies to improve the quality of education for pupils. The new reading and writing scheme, launched two years ago, has significantly improved standards across the school. Thorough and detailed self-evaluation accurately informs the decisive and successful actions taken since the previous inspection. Consequently, teaching is better, the curriculum is more relevant and pupils' achievement has improved, demonstrating good capacity for sustained improvement.

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Accelerate pupils' progress in mathematics and raise their attainment further by:
  - ensuring that the transition from whole class work to planned group activities in all numeracy lessons is managed speedily so that the pace of pupils learning does not slow
  - continuing to implement the new mathematics scheme across the school with fidelity and rigour.
  
- Enable Reception aged children to have freedom of access to a stimulating outdoor environment so as to provide a more extensive range of learning opportunities for them.

### **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

<b>2</b>
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All pupils make good progress in lessons because teachers use assessments to plan specific learning outcomes matched to their needs. Teachers then teach to those outcomes giving pupils the support required to meet them. In a mixed age Reception and Year 1 class children and pupils made good progress with their reading and writing because they were all challenged through tasks fit for purpose. This mixed age structure has raised the achievement of children in reception since it was implemented two years ago. In a Year 2 to 4 mathematics lesson, flexible grouping enabled higher achieving younger pupils to work collaboratively with older pupils on an interesting problem solving activity. They developed critical thinking skills well while improving their knowledge and understanding of how to measure accurately. Children and pupils move in and out of different groups within classes according to their learning needs and this accelerates their progress. All are able to work at the pace appropriate to their needs. When children start in reception their skills and development vary from year to year but generally they are broadly typical for their age. Pupils make good progress, achieve well and reach above average attainment by Year 4. There is no difference between the achievement of boys and girls and all year groups make good progress.

Pupils say that there is no bullying and that they all have an adult in whom they trust and can turn to with any problems. Pupils appreciate having a worry box in which they can post any concerns they have and are confident that the headteacher will deal with them promptly. Pupils are involved in implementing the school’s behaviour policy and have a vital say in how their school can be improved. They are keen to take up jobs of responsibility within school and to be involved in community initiatives beyond the school’s gates. Pupils in the cookery club are currently involved in planning what food to make for senior citizens who have been invited to the school’s Christmas performance. Pupils come from a wide rural environment, including very small hamlets and isolated farms, yet they all nominate a person whom they consider would benefit from a Harvest gift and visit the home of that person with a gift, accompanied by an adult.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	2
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	2
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective is the provision?**

Teaching is relevant, challenging and successfully engages pupils’ interest and accelerates their learning. Skilful lesson planning, based on a detailed assessment of pupils’ prior learning, ensures that pupils’ needs are well met. In a whole school science lesson the investigation was linked to the importance of wearing clothes to keep safe in the dark. All pupils made good progress in planning an investigation and by the end of the lesson they had a deep knowledge and understanding of how to carry out a fair test. Each age group completed tasks to move them along with their learning at the appropriate level. In a few mathematics lessons, following teaching delivered to the whole class, teachers take too long explaining the different group activities planned for the rest of the lesson. On these rare occasions the pace of learning is slowed.

Flexibly planned and innovative, the curriculum meets pupils’ needs well. Whole school topics based on a five year cycle ensure that the curriculum is broad and balanced and, in particular, that pupils do not repeat the same work. Relevance lies at the heart of the curriculum. Weekly swimming sessions for each pupil make a valuable contribution to their physical fitness, but also teach them about the

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<sup>1</sup>The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

potential dangers of swimming in a river. Effective partnerships with other schools enhance the curriculum. A 'money matters module' taught in Year 4 makes a valuable contribution to pupils' knowledge and understanding of how to plan and manage a budget. Through a French module pupils' awareness of cultural diversity is enriched. Pupils' creativity is enhanced through their involvement in dance and recorder clubs. Information and communication technology pervades the planned topics. Although the new mathematics scheme is being implemented with fidelity and rigour, it is too early to evaluate its impact on pupils' achievement.

Care lies at the core of this school. On entering the school a visitor sees a dynamic photographic display celebrating the interests and achievements of every child on roll. Effective relations with the on-site pre-school ensure that children are well prepared to enter reception. Pupils in Year 4 are well supported when they move on to middle school. However, as recognised by the school, liaison about pupils' work could be better, so that their rate of learning is more rigorously sustained and built upon when they move into Year 5. A plan has very recently been put in place to improve this situation, but it is too early to evaluate its effectiveness. Procedures for following up on pupils' absence are robust and very effective. Currently, there are no pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities on roll. There are procedures in place, though, to ensure that when there are, they receive the support they need to remove any barriers to learning.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher leads and manages the school effectively. Supported by a small staff team she promotes drive and ambition which focuses on every pupil reaching his or her full personal and academic potential. Pupils are set challenging targets and well supported in meeting them. Leadership responsibilities are shared and all staff embrace the school's vision and work ceaselessly to bring about improvements, which benefit the pupils. Monitoring of teaching and learning is rigorous and feedback is given to support teachers in improving their practice.

Collaboration with other schools in the area enhances the pupils' curriculum. For example, a specialist physical education teacher from the middle school supports the physical education programme. Volunteers from the community come into school and support pupils with their reading. Links with parents and carers are effective. All of these links accelerate pupils' learning and raise their achievement. Equality of opportunity lies at the heart of this school, where children are treated with dignity and respect. Effective policies and systems are in place to ensure pupils are safe. Child protection procedures meet requirements and risk assessments are thorough and detailed. Pupils' understanding and involvement in their local and national communities is good. Globally, they are engaged with communities elsewhere in the

world through water aid and seeds for Africa projects, but they are not yet directly linked up with pupils from overseas schools. The next stage of the community cohesion action plan is to establish video conferencing with schools in Australia and India. Members of the governing body support and challenge the headteacher. They spend time in school regularly and provide valuable advice on setting a budget in such a small school.

*These are the grades for the leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

There are five Reception aged children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They make good progress in relation to their starting points. All can write their names independently forming their letters accurately and most construct simple sentences. They recognise numbers up to five and most to 10. A few can subtract two from 10 confidently. Their personal development is particularly strong. Attainment for the past two years has been above average and is rising consistently year on year, from 2009 when it was average.

Teaching is based on children's interests. On the spot assessments are used to realign teaching and so raise children's achievement. For example, observing a few children were not particularly interested in a number activity but were fascinated by the Jasper Beanstalk story, the teacher used this to develop their understanding of 'taller than' and 'shorter than'. Their outdoor learning environment is used well to promote their physical development and to get their hearts pumping. But, too often, children do not have frequent enough access to choose to learn outdoors. Opportunities are, therefore, sometimes missed to accelerate their learning as children cannot always follow their immediate interest in their outdoor environment. Children are cared for well and they are happy, as seen by the smiles on their faces.

The lead teacher is deeply reflective and from her self-evaluation has drawn up a detailed, but focused, plan to improve the quality of provision for the children. Links with parents and carers are effective and good two way communication between home and school significantly enhances children's learning.



*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	2
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

**Views of parents and carers**

Returns from inspection questionnaires indicate that parents and carers are pleased with what the school achieves for their children. In a very small school a concern expressed by a very few parents or carers can trigger a much higher percentage of disagreement in the table below than a school of average size. Inspection evidence corroborates parents’ and carers’ positive views of the school.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at West Woodburn First School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspector received 13 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 28 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	7	54	5	38	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	6	46	7	54	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	2	15	11	85	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	3	23	9	69	1	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	0	0	12	92	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	0	0	12	92	1	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	2	15	10	77	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	2	15	8	62	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	2	15	9	69	1	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	3	23	7	54	1	8	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	0	0	11	85	1	8	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	0	0	10	77	1	8	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	2	15	9	69	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



5 December 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of West Woodburn First School, Hexham, NE48 2RX**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave me as a visitor to your school. I enjoyed talking with you and am pleased that you told me that you value your learning and find your teachers to be very helpful. I found that your school is good.

Here are the main things I found.

- Your lessons are interesting and challenging and so you make good progress with your reading and writing. Your written poems are very good.
- You enjoy your learning, attend school regularly and behave well.
- You take on jobs willingly and look after each other well.
- You understand why it is important to eat healthy foods, take regular exercise and know how to keep yourselves safe.
- Your topic work helps you to think critically and to solve problems confidently.
- You help other people within your community enthusiastically and willingly.
- Your teachers care about you, always want you to achieve your best and your headteacher leads and manages your school well.

I have asked your headteacher to make a few things better for you. I have asked her to let those of you in the reception class have more opportunities to learn outdoors. In addition I have asked her to make sure that you always get started on your interesting group activities in your numeracy lessons quickly so that you make even better progress in mathematics than you do at present.

Please continue to work hard and help your headteacher to make your school even better than it is at present.

Yours sincerely

Jeffery Plumb  
Lead inspector

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